3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

wooden handle. The hoer sits on the ground or squats on one knee or both, as he chooses, and catching the grass with one hand cuts it off just under the surface with the hoe. Shaking the dirt from the roots of the weeds he throws them into piles, leaving the ground clean and smooth. It is a good surface cultivation, suitable for this soil and climate, and when the season is favorable, the yield for the amount of ground tilled is very good. 241

The Indian corn grown by the Shullas is a small early variety, which is in roasting ear a fortnight before the early dura is ready for parching. But before any grain is harvested a sort of first fruits' sacrifice is made, an old man and woman go to the various fields of the village and bring in some of the ripening ears of corn and heads of dura, and place them by the sacred house of the village. Some is later taken and ground and mixed with water and plastered on the side of the sacred tukl, the rest is taken by the people and some put on the door of their own houses, and some is carefully tied up within. 243

When the dura is ready for harvesting, the heads are cut off short with a clam shell and heaped upon a rack made of poles resting upon forked posts about two feet above the ground. After drying a month it is flailed out with heavy clubs by the men and winnowed by the women and carried to the village, where it is stored in large barrel shaped bins made of coarse grass. The bottom of the large basket granary is oval, a grass band wrapped with rope is formed about the small base and resting in the forks of short stakes driven in the ground bears the weight of the filled basket and keeps it off the ground and free from ants. [237] [251]

There are very many varieties of dura. One man gave me the names of thirty-two varieties. It is probable however that the same variety has different names in different localities.

Dura is eaten in a variety of ways. The earliest heads are simply thrown on the fire and roasted. It is often merely boiled till softened and eaten so. A great deal is made into a mild beer and used as a regular food diet. The popular way of cooking it is to grind it into a fine meal and cook it into a mush and eat it with milk, or cook it up with meat. It is sometimes boiled with beans, and sesame is often eaten with it. A sort of dura bread is also made. 252

The Shulla retains all of his pastoral instincts and prizes his flocks and herds above all else. His sheep are very inferior in size and have no wool where wool ought to grow. His goats are small and few are good milk producers. His cows are also generally poor in milking qualities, but are fair in size and in beef conformation. They belong to the Indian breed of cattle, which have the hump on the wethers. 233

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

more practical purpose of tethering the cattle as towards sunset they come winding back from the pasture. In the hot months, if there is no danger from lions, they are left all night in the open and the byre is used as a dormitory by the boys and unmarried men of the village. It is the custom, too, for the unmarried girls to sleep together in vacant huts in the village, for the sleeping hut of a household is reserved for the householder and his wife and small children.

The rear part of the store hut is taken up by an enormous circular grain basket, four feet high and the same in diameter, standing clear of the floor on a wooden, three-legged stand and safe from the depredations of white ants. Whenever possible, cooking is done outside, but during the rains it is done over a fire of sticks or millet stalks burning in a hollow scooped out in the floor near the wall. A variety of pots clutters the floor space: the large earthenware water pot, an earthenware pot and a shallow iron dish for cooking, small beer pots, a number of drinking bowls made from the tough rinds of gourds neatly halved and dried in the sun. The roofing poles, resting on the mud walls and rising to an apex, form convenient places for tucking away household goods and personal treasures. Such an item one cannot fail to notice is that of several large heads of grain; these are stored for the next season's planting, and no matter how desperate the food situation may become, they will remain untouched, for the next year's supply of food depends on this stock of seed. Behind the poles also may be found a fragment of a mirror, a couple of cigarette tins holding a little oil or a handful of beads, a girl's blue dancing cloth or even the good wife's best Sunday frock, run up for her by the Sisters from some material brought from Kodok, probably some dreadful riot of green and red and yellow, hideous indeed to Western eyes, but to the proud owner more delightful than any Paris creation. Sometimes, to a visitor's distress, a line is slung across the hut on which hang dried fish or strips of meat. The high tone of these delicacies, the myriads of flies they attract and the thick, black smoke of the fire which, having no means of getting away, fills the hut, do not make